

**DDS North Region**  
**Advisory & Planning Council**

September 17, 2014

Meeting Minutes

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Members Present: Collette Bement, Nancy Bilyak, Joe Duffy, Lisa Roland, Annette Scully, Jordan Scheff, Claudia Neumann

Guests: Mary Lou O'Connor

Meeting began at 5:10 p.m.

- Regional Director's Updates – Jordan Scheff began with discussion of the Waitlist. We have notified approximately 45 people or so in the first group of 100 people that they have received an allocation. Four of fourteen people have been placed. Two were placed on 7/1 due to increasing needs. The next eight will continue to be planned for within the next two weeks. The next group will be notified in October and the last group by January. There will probably be more than 100 total. Some families that have been notified have stated that they are not ready for placement at this time. Case managers are trying to encourage people to take what is being offered now as there is no way to be sure what will be offered at a later time. Some continue to not accept which means that the distribution may be somewhat different than what is was originally.

Jordan shared that he had the opportunity to meet with Sen. Beth Bye and Shelagh McClure from the Council on Developmental Disabilities. They toured the Hartford Center in Newington along with a Public CLA and one of our Public respite centers which was a good opportunity to connect faces and actual settings, as well as staff and what they do. Jordan feels it was helpful for them to see actual settings and have a better understanding of what a group home is and how they are run. He would also like to have them visit some Private settings as well, which he will try to schedule for some time in November.

A question was asked whether money was divided evenly between the three regions. Jordan explained that it was not. Geographically the regions are not evenly distributed so the numbers of individuals are not the same. There was not an effort to distribute evenly among them.

- Community of Practice (CoP) –  
A meeting was held on Monday, 9/15/14, at the Sheraton in Rocky Hill, which was the one year anniversary of when the project began. Ms. Sharon Lewis from Washington was the keynote speaker at the event. A video of her presentation can be viewed from the DDS website at <http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?Q=553196&A=2645>

Question was asked if minutes from the different committees were posted anywhere. Presently they are not posted. This is being coordinated and they should be posted sometime soon.

Besides CoP and working with families on system change, there is also a Mentor Project with private providers that has been occurring. It involves about 8 providers that have been working with a statewide group from DDS.

Lisa Roland raised a question regarding the disparity between the cost of public services versus private and why there continues to be public services when the cost is so much greater and so many more people could be served. Jordan briefly explained the issues regarding bargaining unit employees who are employed by the State and employees working for private providers who were not unionized which is where the disparity began. DDS is downsizing our public programs where possible. A number of homes have been closed, and there are no new admissions being taken into any public setting. One of the main reasons the cost is so high for public services is that with recent retirements, we were told that these positions could not be refilled. Those hours have all had to be covered with overtime which is much more costly. We have just recently been told that we can begin to hire more direct care staff which should bring the cost of public programs down significantly.

- Housing Project Update – Discussion on hold since Walter Glomb could not attend tonight's meeting.
- Discussion Regarding Officers – There was brief discussion regarding Council membership and the election of officers. Jordan shared a copy of committee bylaws which are outdated but have not changed. They outline the terms of membership and the duties of elected officers (mainly Chairperson and Vice Chairperson). Jordan will send to the Council for review and consideration.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

***Claudia Neumann***

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Executive Secretary